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ABSTRACT

This workbook is designed to be used with the trainer's manual in supervisory training sessions on behavior modification of employees. This is one of four manuals prepared to aid supervisors in training disadvantaged groups using social reinforcement techniques. Related documents are available as VT 018 031-VT 018 035 in this issue. (MF)

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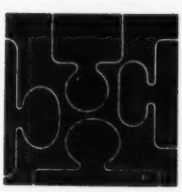

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SUPERVISORY WORKBOOK

ON

BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION

Prepared for
Office of Research and Development
Manpower Administration
U.S. Department of Labor

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This document is one of four manuals designed to aid supervisors in the training of employees, particularly hardcore disadvantaged. Its specific purpose is to enable management to strengthen, broaden, and generally maintain an established, operational social reinforcement system. This manual is designed for use by supervisors while attending a training program on behavior modification. It is keyed specifically to the manual "How to Train Supervisors in Behavior Modification," and is therefore not meant to be used independently.

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FOREWORD

The contents of this workbook were tested under U.S. Department of Labor, Manpower Administration, Research and Development Contract No. 82-05-70-05. The manual derives from a project known as Operation Pathfinder, conducted in Los Angeles by the Mentec Corporation.

Mentec Corporation extends its appreciation to the five hundred foremen, supervisors, and managers of over one hundred companies and public agencies who since 1967 contributed to the development and success of this project.

For further information concerning the contents of this workbook or its utilization in Operation Pathfinder, contact the Office of Research and Development, Manpower Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C.

This document is one of four manuals designed to aid supervisors in the training of employees, particularly hardcore disadvantaged. Its specific purpose is to enable management to strengthen, broaden and generally maintain an established, operational social reinforcement system. Three companion documents are:

- Job/Behavioral Analysis Manual
- How to Train Supervisors in Behavior Modification
- How to Maintain a Social Reinforcement Program

Theoretical rationale and supporting evidence underlying these manuals are presented in a report entitled:

- Operation Pathfinder: Shaping Work Behavior of Ex-Offenders and Other Disadvantaged People Using Social Reinforcement Techniques

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INTRODUCTION

This workbook is primarily an aid to learning the material presented in the training sessions on behavior modification. Its use is keyed to the trainer's manual and it is not, therefore, a self-contained, independent "textbook." However, when used in conjunction with participation in the training sessions, it tends to assume a high degree of independence.

The workbook is intended for use by supervisors participating in the training sessions. It is recommended, therefore, that such supervisors feel free to write notes, comments, etc. within the workbook. After the training sessions have been completed, the workbook will represent a review and reference source.

To maximize use of the workbook and the material presented during the training sessions supervisors are encouraged to attempt application of material learned between training sessions. The results of such applications, however successful or unsuccessful should be discussed during succeeding training sessions.

EXERCISE 1

SUPERVISORS

Before we can understand the roles and behaviors of others, we need to understand our own.

A SUPERVISOR IS:

WHAT DOES HE DO?

HOW DOES HE DO IT?

EXERCISE 1

SUPERVISOR'S TASKS

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

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8.

9.

10.

EXERCISE 2

DESCRIBING BEHAVIORS

Which of the following statements are descriptions of behavior?

1. John smiled when I said hello to him.

2. John is a lazy employee.

3. Mary works slower than the other employees.

4. John hit the other guy when they disagreed.

5. Jane has a lot of pride in her appearance.

6. Jane cannot be trusted.

7. Susie made three mistakes today.

8. John is a hostile and aggressive guy.

To develop skill in describing behavior you must sharpen your observations. A description of behavior is a description of observable actions. You should avoid describing character traits or imparting motives or intentions to another person. You should restrict yourself to stating what you observed. You cannot prevent yourself from developing attitudes or judgments about another person but such attitudes or judgments are guesses and should not influence your behavior towards that person. The more we can suspend our guesses and the more we depend on factual observations, the better will be our training work, our supervisor-subordinate relations, and our personal development as supervisors.

EXERCISE 3

TASK ANALYSIS

Behavioral Objectives

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SECTION I

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT 1

A. REVIEW

1. Purpose

The purpose of this training program is to improve your skills as a trainer which, in turn, should make you a more effective supervisor.

2. Focus

The training program is probably unlike any that you have attended in that it will give you a new vocabulary and a new way of looking at your job and your subordinates. The key word upon which all of your learning will be based is behavior.

3. What is Behavior?

Behavior is what you see and hear a person do. Two or more persons observing behavior will see or hear the same thing. All that we know about a person is what his behavior tells us. All that anyone knows about us is what our behavior tells them. Everything else that we think we know about other people is our interpretations or impressions of what we have observed them do.

Two people will very readily agree on what they have observed a third person do or say. These same people, however, will often disagree very much in their interpretations and impressions concerning why the third person did what he was observed to be doing. Since people have a strong tendency to interpret behavior, you need to develop the habit of placing greater emphasis on observed behavior only.

4. Behavior Training

To train a person is to shape his behavior. Training means helping a person learn specific behaviors required in specific situations. The goal of all training is to enable a worker to achieve all behavioral skills necessary for successfully accomplishing his job and maintaining company integrity. The behavior of a worker constitutes his job performance. To the supervisor, behavior training is job training and job training is behavior training.

5. Primary Training Tool

Your primary tool for training is your own behavior. Through your own behavior on the job you tell your subordinate what you expect him to do, how well he does it, what he needs to learn, and what he needs to unlearn. All of your behaviors are continuously communicating something to others and the behaviors of others are communicating something to you.

Only a part of our communication behavior is speech and writing. All of our nonverbal behavior communicates something as well, whether we intend it that way or not. In fact, most of our teaching on the job or in the home is through our nonverbal behavior, because such behaviors occur continuously. So you are continuously teaching something (good or bad) to your subordinates as you perform your own job.

6. Communicating

In training people we often teach some undesirable behaviors inadvertently. The subordinate fails to learn the behaviors which we think we are teaching and we get irritated with him. Worse still, the subordinate may get irritated, resentful, discouraged and even may give up trying to learn from us.

How well do we communicate? What does our present behavior tell other people? How do we communicate what needs to be learned, why it needs to be learned and how it can be learned? How do we make sure a subordinate understands what we are trying to tell him? Answers to these questions relate directly to the success of training.

All of us think we know a lot about training. You have been trained and you have trained others. There are efficient ways of training and there are inefficient ways. Inefficient ways result in loss of time, money, and, all too often, loss of supervisory respect by the subordinate. In some cases, particularly those of the hardcore disadvantaged population, the subordinate may quit the company or act in hostile ways which encourages the company to fire him.

No one likes to work for an unconcerned, ineffective, or autocratic supervisor, regardless of his position in a company. This statement includes you and your subordinates.

B. PRELUDE TO TRAINING SESSION 2

1. New Subordinate Trainees

Your new trainees will not act, dress, talk, or work like your regular subordinates when they start their jobs. That is obviously the reason they need training. All of them will show some appropriate behaviors and also some behaviors which will need to be changed or modified before they qualify as regular employees.

You will have to tolerate (but not condone) some deficiencies at the start. It is up to you to effectively and efficiently correct those deficiencies. How you accomplish this task is the primary subject matter of this training program.

2. Initial Evaluation of a Trainee

It is important for a supervisor to obtain a good "fix" on the capabilities of a new trainee. Many devices have been used to evaluate a trainee's abilities, needs for learning, and his learning progress. The most direct and accurate way is to (1) put him to work at a task, and (2) observe exactly how he performs the task. In observing you will note the things he does well and the things he does not do well. Do not ignore those things that he does well, concentrating only on his deficiencies. Reinforce (compliment) him generously for his correct behaviors and demonstrate encouragement in his eliminating his deficiencies. Start with positive, reinforcing behavior toward the trainee and his subsequent learning will be rapid.

3. Behavior Modification

After evaluating a trainee's initial competence, you should know precisely what behaviors need to be improved or changed. In modifying behaviors you should be fully aware of the importance of systematically and consistently applying a technique known as "behavior modification." This technique is simple in principle but often misused. For example, you will modify a trainee's behavior by telling him that if he does not improve his performance more quickly, he may be fired. However, the "threat approach" is seldom as effective as the reinforcing approach and it may have long-lasting, negative effects.

Consider the following points prior to training a new subordinate:

- Practice communication skills (communication will be discussed at length in Training Session 3).
- Know very specifically what you want the trainee to do and how you want him to do it.
- Tell him what you want him to do and how he should do it.
- Demonstrate how a task should be done. Ask for immediate feedback (questions or comments) and demonstrate again, if necessary.
- When the trainee starts doing the task, let him know immediately how well he is doing. Don't hold back praise (social reinforcement) for every right move he makes.
- Point out exactly what he does not do correctly so he will know what needs to be learned.
- Reward correct behaviors with smiles, nods, words of praise, and, by all means, your attention. These are powerful incentives for the trainee to improve his performance.

No matter how simple, appropriate behavior is seldom learned by a single leap from incorrect to correct. Generally, it is learned in steps. Reward the trainee for every move he makes towards achieving all necessary job skills and other on-the-job behaviors. You will gain his respect and he will learn rapidly.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

In studying the above material, consider those factors in the job environment which will facilitate your job as a trainer, and those which will interfere with your job. List the more important factors on the following page. Such should be accounted for in designing a training program for new subordinates. That is, a supervisor should take advantage of environmental facilitating factors and work around the interference factors.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

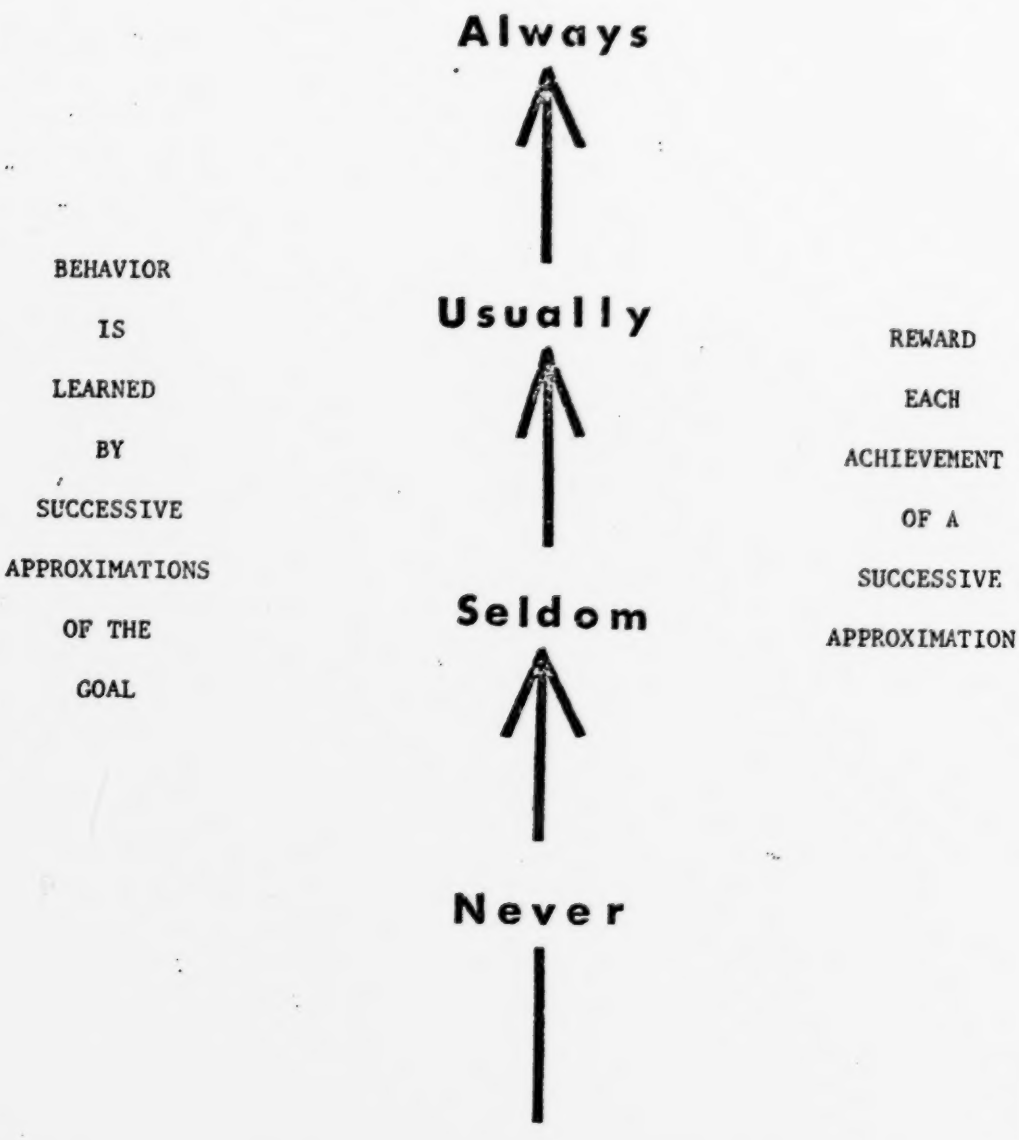
What in your environment will FACILITATE you in accomplishing your task?

What will INTERFERE in the accomplishment of your task?

EXERCISE 4

THE LEARNING PROCESS

BEHAVIOR REQUIRED



BEHAVIOR IS LEARNED BY SUCCESSIVE APPROXIMATIONS OF THE GOAL

REWARD EACH ACHIEVEMENT OF A SUCCESSIVE APPROXIMATION

BEHAVIOR OBSERVED

SECTION II

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT 2

A. REVIEW

1. Training

The training task involves helping the trainee increase the frequency with which he performs correctly each required behavior and decrease the frequency with which he exhibits inappropriate behaviors. At the beginning, a trainee may seldom or never perform a task correctly. Learning to demonstrate correctly all required behaviors always or nearly always is the training goal.

In all likelihood, a trainee will not move directly from never to nearly always. Old habits do not disappear overnight. New habits are acquired gradually, by successive approximations.

2. Successive Approximations

Successive approximations refer to all of the behavioral increments which lead nearer to the required behavioral goal. An improvement in performance is a movement in the right direction, no matter how slight. It should be recognized immediately by the supervisor and the associated trainee should be reinforced.

3. Social Reinforcement

Movement toward a behavioral goal is greatly facilitated if the trainee is systematically and consistently reinforced each time he demonstrates a performance improvement. Reinforcements available to any supervisor derive from his own behaviors toward a trainee. A smile, a compliment or any similar way of letting the trainee know that he is going in the right direction and that his performance pleases you. Such reinforcers are social reinforcers and their use can have dramatic effects when properly employed.

BEHAVIORS THAT ARE REINFORCED TEND TO BE REPEATED.

BEHAVIORS THAT ARE NOT REINFORCED TEND TO DISAPPEAR.

The second of the above two statements tends to hold true only when required behaviors are consistently reinforced. Thus, if a trainee is seldom reinforced or if he is reinforced haphazardly, many of his old, inappropriate behaviors may remain indefinitely.

Nearly everyone wants, needs and seeks social reinforcement. As he receives them for specific behaviors, he tends to alter his inappropriate behaviors so that he will receive additional reinforcements.

4. Social Reinforcers

On page 15 list as many social reinforcers as you can think of which could be employed by you in relation to your subordinates. Consider their use on the job. Test them out and determine which are the most effective. Consider also the use of a combination of two or more for a given situation.

B. PRELUDE TO TRAINING SESSION 3

1. Communication

Nearly all that you do as a supervisor, as a manager, and as a trainer is accomplished through your communications with your subordinates, your fellow supervisors and your superiors.

Communication is your tool. Your subordinates may use machines, technical instruments, and other materials, but you use communication. Subordinates are machine and production oriented. You are people oriented.

- To train is to communicate with people
- To communicate ineffectively is to train ineffectively
- Communication is behavior

Consider the sequence of events in the chart on page 16:

2. One-Way Versus Two-Way Communication

Effective communication involves an exchange of messages. One-way communication involves a one-way message and the sender may never know for sure

whether the message was received correctly. Two-way communication, on the other hand, involves an acknowledgement of a message. The sender receives feedback regarding how well the message was received and understood. If feedback information indicates a lack of understanding, an exchange of messages will resolve the problem.

3. Filters

Communication "filters" are invisible barriers that let in what you want to hear and keep out what you don't want to hear. Communication breaks down when filters develop because they distort messages.

If a subordinate is afraid to admit a mistake or ask for advice for fear he will be reprimanded or considered inferior, respectively, it is because you have a communication filter and the subordinate knows it. That filter will result in your receiving false or distorted information from the subordinate. In such an exchange nobody wins, neither you nor the subordinate, and certainly not the company.

Understanding why filters develop can facilitate their elimination. For the most part, filters are protective devices which are used to "make life easier." In the long run, however, they actually make the effective operation of the work situation more difficult because the supervisor never obtains a true picture of what is transpiring. In the training situation, the subordinate learns more slowly than desirable and the process is more costly to the company.

The supervisor is in a position of power over his subordinates. To them, he IS the company. If communication filters develop, he is responsible for their development. And it is up to him to eliminate them.

Social Reinforcers

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

BEHAVIOR PROBLEM----------ACTION----------CONSEQUENCE

Communication Behavior of Supervisor

1. Some improvement
2. No improvement
3. Problem solved
4. Trainee quits or is fired

A problem has arisen regarding the behavior of a subordinate. The manner in which you communicate the nature of the problem and the need to resolve it has much to do with effecting the appropriate change in his behavior. There will always be a consequence resulting from your communication. It may be either positive or negative, depending on the effectiveness and appropriateness of your communication.

If the action you took did not solve the problem, you need to examine what you did and alter your behavior.

SECTION III

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT 3

A. DIRECT VERSUS INDIRECT STATEMENT OF FEELINGS

In geometry, the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. It is no less the case in communication, i.e., the most efficient way of communicating is to state directly how you feel about something. Any other method is "beating around the bush" and is likely to result in the development of a communication filter. A direct statement of feelings gets straight to the point. Both the sender and receiver fully understand the intent and contents of the message. And the consequences of this kind of communication is usually positive in nature.

Consider each of the supervisor-subordinate situations presented on the following page. Try to determine which of the statements made by a supervisor are direct expressions of feelings. (A discussion of these statements will occur during the fourth and final training session.)

B. CHECKING PERCEPTION

A direct statement of feeling is one way of facilitating the avoidance of filters in the communication process. But it is not enough by itself. Besides stating one's feelings directly, it is also necessary to check your perception of what you saw or heard. This simply means that it is necessary to be sure that what you have seen or heard is actually what occurred, uninfluenced by interpretations, attitudes or opinions. The point is that if filters have developed, checking your perception of what has transpired is the best way to detect them. Once they are detected, you can do something about them.

Consider the supervisor-subordinate situations on page 19. In this case, try to determine which of the statements made by a supervisor are true attempts to verify an interpretation.

Direct Versus Indirect Statements of Feelings

An employee arrives at work 30 minutes late. Determine which of the following possible responses by the Supervisor are direct expressions of his feelings:

1. "I am glad to see that you like to work around here."
2. "Is there something that you don't understand about the company policy?"
3. "Your being late makes me angry."
4. "I am mad at you now, come back in 15 minutes when I am not so mad and can talk to you about your being late this morning."

An employee gets into an angry discussion with a customer. The Supervisor who overheard it said later to the employee:

1. "How stupid can you get?"
2. "How many times do I have to tell you that the customer is always right?"
3. "Is that the way you think you can get ahead in this world?"
4. "I too got angry at what that woman said to you, but let's talk about a better way of handling it."

Checking Your Perception of What you Heard or Saw

Which of the statements below is an attempt to verify your interpretation of something that another person said or did:

1. "You are not paying attention."

2. "You are trying to con me."

3. "The way you sit there makes me think that you disagree with me. Do you?"

4. "You are smiling a lot and I don't know what that means."

5. "It seemed to me that you walked away from the job before you completed it. Am I right"?

6. "I'll explain it again, stupid"!

Our inferences about other people's feelings can be, and often are inaccurate. Thus, it is important to check them out. Perception-checking responses aim to(1) convey to the other that you want to understand him as a person - and that means understanding his feeling, and(2) help you avoid actions that you later regret because they were based on false assumptions regarding the other's feelings.

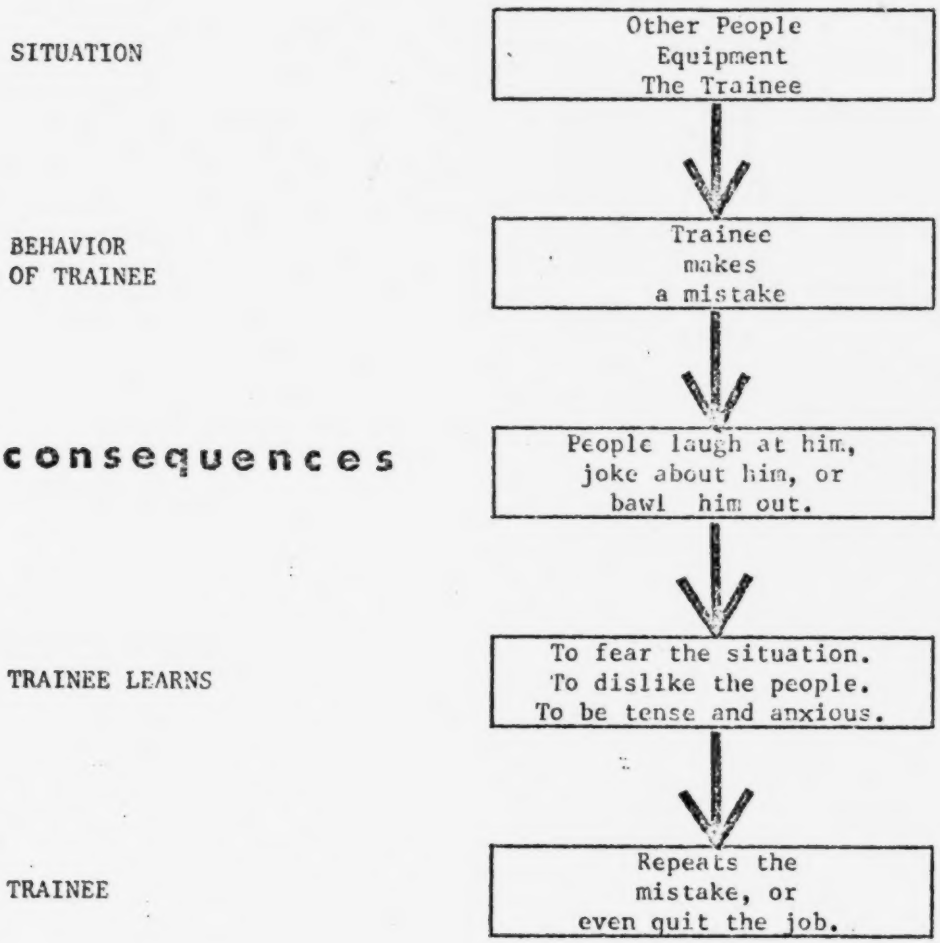
Examples: "Am I right that you feel disappointed that nobody commented on your suggestion"?

"Did you feel pushed out of line by what was just said"?

"I get the impression that you are angry with me. Are you"?

"I'm not sure whether your expression means that my comment hurt your feelings, irritated you, or confused you."

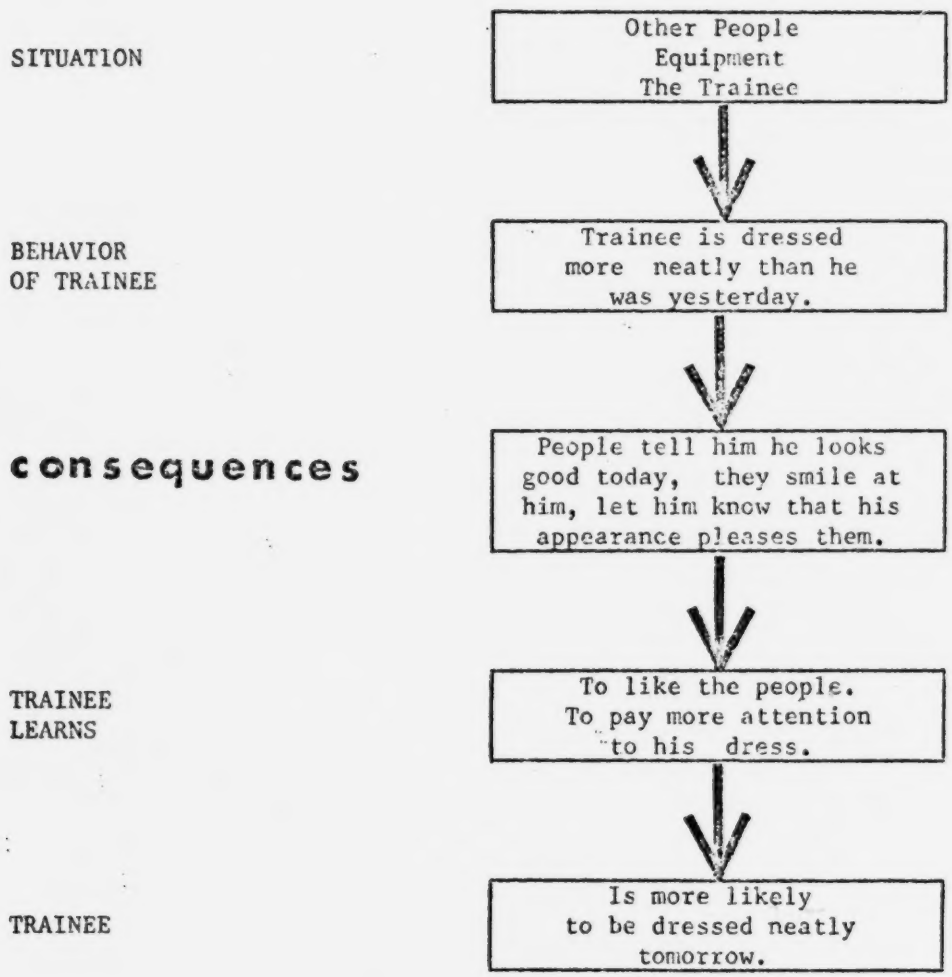
BEHAVIOR IN A WORK SITUATION



BEHAVIOR IS STRONGLY INFLUENCED BY ITS CONSEQUENCES.

PEOPLE PROVIDE CONSEQUENCES FOR TRAINEE BEHAVIOR.

BEHAVIOR IN A WORK SITUATION


SITUATION
Other People
Equipment
The Trainee
BEHAVIOR OF TRAINEE
Trainee is dressed more neatly than he was yesterday.
consequences
People tell him he looks good today, they smile at him, let him know that his appearance pleases them.
TRAINEE LEARNS
To like the people.
To pay more attention to his dress.
TRAINEE
Is more likely to be dressed neatly tomorrow.

BEHAVIOR IS STRONGLY INFLUENCED BY ITS CONSEQUENCES.

PEOPLE PROVIDE CONSEQUENCES FOR TRAINEE BEHAVIOR.

SECTION IV

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT 4

A. PRACTICING THE FEEDBACK PROCESS

Positive feedback is vitally important to the training. Consider the following sequence of events and try to practice the underlying process on the job:

- o Talk with the trainee frequently, if only for a few minutes.
- o Start out by telling him everything that he is doing well. This builds his confidence in you and increases his motivation.
- o Then tell him specifically those performance requirements that he needs to achieve.
- o Wait for his feedback to you, and listen.
- o If he is reluctant to ask questions or his feedback is inadequate, encourage him to state his feelings directly.
- o Give him positive suggestions on how he can improve his performance.
- o Reinforce him as he improves his performance.

B. EMPHASIZING SOCIAL REINFORCEMENT

Behavior is strongly influenced by others. If we wish to teach another something, we must show him what is to be done and we must reward him when he does it. If a trainee's correct behavior goes unnoticed, he is deprived of the social reinforcement that is necessary for him to want to sustain such behavior.

While the correct behavior is being learned, it should be reinforced frequently. Once such behaviors become habitual, the frequency may need only be periodic.

There is no magic inherent in training. It does not require a lot of education to be an effective trainer. It does require knowledge of job skills and it does require leadership qualities. Being a supervisor, presumably you have sufficient knowledge of skills required of your subordinates. However, good leadership evolves from an understanding of why people behave as they do and of how their behaviors can be modified.

The principal mechanism underlying behavior modification is social reinforcement. Social reinforcement costs neither you nor your company anything. Yet, if you withhold social reinforcement, the cost can be substantial, in terms of turnover, productivity, absenteeism, etc.

C. A PREDICTION

We predict with confidence that your conscientious use of the material that you have learned in this training program will substantially increase your effectiveness as a supervisor. Eventually, your trainee dropout rate and your employee turnover rate will decrease, absenteeism and tardiness will decrease, and productivity will increase. And both you and your subordinates will gain increased satisfaction with your jobs.

The key to the successful implementation of this program, of course, lies in your hands.